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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/625,483	07/22/2003	Andreas Hilliger	14580-020001	9125
20985	7590	12/02/2005	EXAMINER SEFER, AHMED N	
FISH & RICHARDSON, PC P.O. BOX 1022 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440-1022			ART UNIT 2826	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 12/02/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/625,483	Applicant(s) HILLIGER ET AL.	
	Examiner A. Sefer	Art Unit 2826	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 September 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,5-18 and 20-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 11-18 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 5-10 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 21-26 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 9/13/2005 has been entered. Claims 2-4 and 19 have been cancelled and new claims 21-26 have been added.

Double Patenting

2. Claims 21-26 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claims 5-10. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

((e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

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4. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Nguyen et al. (“Nguyen”) USPN 6,878,620.

Nguyen discloses (figs. 1-2, col. 4, lines 7-15 and lines 53-60 and abstract) a method of forming a contact to an underlayer or region of a device comprising forming a contact hole 110/210; forming a contact hole barrier layer 106/206 of a barrier material in the contact hole; wet etching the contact hole after forming the contact hole barrier layer (col. 4, lines 53-60); applying a second contact hole barrier layer 114/214 on the contact hole barrier layer; etching the contact hole barrier layer on the bottom surface of the contact hole; depositing a liner material 220 in the contact hole to form a contact a contact liner to promote subsequent filling of the contact hole; and filling the contact hole with a conductive material 222.

Regarding the recitation calling for “to compensate for ...”, it constitutes functional language. In re Cas, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967); See also In re Otto, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963).

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 1 and 5-10 are allowed.
6. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: A reference which is pertinent to applicant's disclosure -- Nguen -- teaches a method of forming a contact to an underlayer or region of a device comprising forming a contact hole through a portion of the device including a first contact hole barrier layer, the contact hole having sides which extend above and below the first barrier layer and having a bottom surface; forming a contact hole barrier layer of a barrier material in the contact hole, the contact hole barrier layer being continuous between the sides and bottom surface of the contact hole; etching the contact

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hole barrier layer on the bottom of the contact hole surface; depositing a liner material in the contact hole to form a contact a contact liner to promote subsequent filling of the contact hole; and filling the contact hole with a conductive material. However, Nguen fails to teach wet etching the contact hole; and forming the contact hole barrier layer of a barrier material in the contact hole after wet etching the contact hole. The above limitations in combination with other claim limitations are not taught or fairly suggested by the prior art nor would it be obvious to modify the references of record so as to manufacture a contact to an underlayer or region of a device of the instant application.


NATHAN J. FLYNN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to A. Sefer whose telephone number is (571) 272-1921.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nathan Flynn can be reached on (571) 272-1915.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ANS

November 25, 2005